

Journal

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1. I gave Cong. Bentley a copy of the DCI's letter of 30 April 1954 expressing our views concerning a Joint Congressional Committee on Central Intelligence. Mr. Bentley said that at the organization meeting of the House Foreign Affairs Committee this week the subject of a joint committee had been seriously discussed led by Cong. Zablocki. The House Foreign Affairs Committee had considered the possibility of putting a subcommittee on intelligence within its own jurisdiction, at least to cover the State Department setup. Mr. Zablocki had phrased his bill to include 9 members of House, so that tentatively 3 each could come from the Appropriations, Armed Services and Foreign Affairs Committees. The idea would then be that these 3 members could keep their parent committees generally informed regarding intelligence activities. The possibility was envisaged, however, that other committees might have an interest in intelligence, and therefore the membership of the Joint Committee was not frozen insofar as selection from specific committees was concerned.

Mr. Bentley agreed that there might well be things in the Zablocki bill which should be changed so as not to impair security in any manner. For instance, he felt that the phrase that the CIA and related services "shall keep the Joint Committee fully and currently informed with respect to their activities" might well be revised to avoid the necessity of revealing current operations which should not be discussed except in retrospect.

While Mr. Bentley felt that the Committee would have to have some staff for stenographic purposes and in order to arrange agenda and the like, he felt that that staff could be drawn from within CIA or the other intelligence services.

Mr. Bentley expressed a willingness to introduce a modified bill if we would care to suggest textual changes which would be acceptable to the Agency. Thus, he said, the Rules Committee would have two proposals before it and would be more likely to accept a satisfactory proposal than if they had to rewrite the bill in Committee. Furthermore, Mr. Bentley felt that if there were any indication of Senate action, the House would tend to want to push their bill to a vote so that the House would be in a better bargaining position in conference with the Senate than if they only had a Senate passed bill to work with.

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